

13:4

Christianity and Society

THE SEXUAL CRISIS OF OUR TIME

by

HENRY ELKIN

THE CHURCH AND THE DISORDER OF SOCIETY

THE AMSTERDAM REPORT

THE CHURCH'S NEW FREEDOM

by

JUNIUS J. MARTIN

RELIGION AND SECULARISM

by

L. F. THORNTON, JR.

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THE FALL CONFERENCE

The Fall Conference of the Fellowship will meet in New York, at Riverside Church and Union Theological Seminary, Oct. 18-19. (*Please note the change from the date previously announced.*) Speakers include Will Herberg of the ILGWU on "Labor and Politics in the Coming Period"; Paul Tillich and Eduard Heimann, reporting on recent trips to Germany; Daniel Jenkins of Great Britain and Alex Miller of New Zealand on "Christian Vocation in Our World"; and John Bennett on the Amsterdam report on "The Church and the Disorder of Society." Detailed programs are available from the Fellowship office.

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EDITORIALS

Frontier Fellowship

At its May meeting the Fellowship of Socialist Christians, under whose auspices this journal is published, changed its name to "FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP: Christians for Social Reconstruction." The reasons for the change are fairly obvious to our readers. It has long been felt that the term "socialist" in this country is subject to too many misinterpretations. The official socialist party is pacifist, and we are not. On the other hand orthodox Marxism is rooted in the belief, which we do not share, that the institution of property is the primary root of evil in human society and that the abolition of this institution will therefore usher in a kind of millennial age. The measure of that error is given by the nightmare of tyranny in Russia, into which the original dream of utopia was transmuted. On the other hand we continue to be socialists in the sense that we believe that the capitalist order of society stands under divine judgment and that there is no justice in modern technical society without a completely pragmatic attitude toward the institution of property. It must be socialized whenever it is of such a character that it makes for injustice through inordinate centralization of power. There is however no redemption in the abolition of a social institution if too much is expected of it. Extravagant religious hopes become the basis of political errors. In the case of the socialization of property the most dangerous error is the centralization of both economic and political power in the hands of a communist oligarchy.

The idea of the "Frontier Fellowship" is that we want to be a group of Christians who seek to explore the frontier of Christian thought and life in the social, political, and economic problems of our day.

The World Council of Churches

Other journals will deal with the religious significance of the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches. We must confine ourselves to the statement of the Assembly which diagnosed the "disorder" of modern society and the relation of the churches to it. The portion of the statement which received the greatest amount of publicity declared: "The Christian Church rejects the ideologies of both Communism and laissez faire Capitalism, and should seek to draw men away from the false assumption that these extremes are the only alternatives. . . . It is the responsibility of Christians to seek new creative solutions [for the organization of modern society] which never allow either justice or freedom to destroy the other."

This statement gives an accurate picture of the social convictions of the first assembly of the free churches of the world. Those convictions were sufficiently radical to refute all the critics of the church who regard religious institutions as naturally conservative, and to baffle conservative members of the church, particularly in America. The idea of making an equilateral condemnation of capitalism and communism is enough to fell quite a few conservatives in America with a stroke of apoplexy. Yet it represented the considered convictions of most of the delegates who worked upon this

particular report. Some of the delegates, particularly from Asia, would probably have preferred a stronger condemnation of capitalism than of communism. The Christians of Europe have certainly moved toward the left in politics during the past century; but they are on the whole very antagonistic to communism and are baffled by the romantic attitude of Asiatics toward the communist cause. But even the Europeans would not have accepted a criticism of communism which did not bring capitalism under equal condemnation.

This equilateral indictment is unfair at one point. The "ideology" of capitalism is the belief that justice will be achieved automatically from the free play of all competitive economic forces. This is a mistaken belief which has resulted in much injustice in modern society. But it could hardly be said that it generates the demonic fury which characterizes modern communism. If one were to be absolutely fair, one would have to point out that the mistaken ideology of capitalism is not wholly incompatible with the preservation of a free society, while the communist dogma results inevitably in the destruction of freedom. But the delegates at Amsterdam were in no mood for such niceties of discrimination. Many would, in any event, be concerned to say an appreciative word for communism as springing from a passion for justice, however mistaken, and a critical word against capitalism, as responsible for the social maladjustments of the modern world.

The sympathy for communism among modern Asiatic and African Christians, manifest at Amsterdam and at many previous ecumenical gatherings is one of the outstanding social facts of our time. There are few Christian communists even in Asia. But evidently thousands of Christians in Asia are sympathetic to communism. There are many reasons for this. The Asiatics know little and care less about what communism does in Europe. In Asia they think of it in terms of Russia's championship of the cause of the colonial peoples against the "imperialist" powers; of the practice of inter-racial fellowship in communist youth

groups; of communism's challenge to China's corrupt government; and in general of the hope which it holds out to the miserable and poverty-stricken people of the orient. Asia has not, in other words, awakened to the deepest tragedy of our age, which is that the alternative to capitalism turned out to be worse than the disease which it was meant to cure. Even Christian Asiatics are not too inclined to heed the warnings about communism from Europeans, and more particularly not from Americans. Whatever the virtues of America may be, it is much too rich and powerful to make much of a moral appeal to people in Africa and Asia. Moreover resentment against racial discrimination is such a large part of the propulsive power of the communist creed in Asia, that America, with its segregated churches, is not in a good moral position to give the warnings which Asiatics need.

One has the uneasy feeling, therefore, that communism will spread in Asia long after it is checked in Europe. In Europe it is certainly checked ideologically, though there is still the possibility of its victory over that continent by political and military pressure. One added factor for the growth of communist sentiment in Asia is the absence of those middle parties of democratic socialism which play so large a role in the politics of Europe.

In India for instance there is increasing danger that the Congress party will become more and more a tool of the reactionary mill owners, despite the socialistic convictions of Nehru. The protest against this rising reaction is being expressed primarily by the growing communist movement of India. The socialist party is small and ineffectual. Nehru is too preoccupied with the total problems of India to give it leadership. In Europe the middle ground is always in danger of being immersed by the floods of passion from the right and the left. In Asia there is a danger that the middle ground, which the World Council of Churches so strongly prefers, may not even establish a foothold. It exists neither in China nor in India.

We have dealt with only one aspect of the report of the World Council on the disorder of the modern world. The general tenor of the total report is such that one might imagine that the churches of the world had adopted the basic creed of our Fellowship. The cynics may suggest that this is not exactly a coincidence, since the secretary of the section which wrote the report, Professor Bennett, is a member of the Fellowship. But however great his contribution to the report, the inference would be wrong. Dozens of people contributed to the report; and it undoubtedly crystallized the social and political convictions of the free churches of the world. Those churches have "moved left," particularly in Europe and Asia. They have done so not merely because (as a socialist member of the Assembly at Amsterdam declared) the whole world has become as insecure as once only proletarians were. It has moved left also because religious convictions have increasingly made the church aware of the social and ethical problems of our modern world.

We are publishing the full report of the Amsterdam Assembly on "The Church and the Disorder of Society" in this issue because we believe that it is a document which will prove to be a real guide to Christians in coming years.

The Battle of Berlin

The battle between the West and Russia in Berlin has gone on long enough to make it quite clear that neither side is going to yield very much. We will stay in Berlin indefinitely, even if it has to be done by a costly "air-lift." It will be costly in lives as well as money in the coming winter months. The Russians will lift the blockade only if we grant them control of the Berlin currency. It seemed for a while that we would compromise by granting them the currency but insisting upon its quadripartite control. Even though that compromise proved unacceptable to the Russians, it would also have resulted in the loss of prestige for the West. The situa-

tion is that the Russians, defeated by the economic revival of western Europe through the European Recovery Program, are still able to maintain their prestige by spreading the view that we will yield to them in the end, if they apply enough pressure. It is certainly not true that we will do this; but we are in a very unfortunate position in regard to Berlin. We have very little to bargain with. We control a part of a city in a Russian world. We perhaps should have abandoned it when the quadripartite control of Germany broke down. Our position became illogical because Berlin was no longer the capital of a single united nation; and it became untenable because the Russians controlled our corridor into the city. (The fact that they did control it was a heritage of those early days of victory when it was thought that the Russians would trust us if only we offered evidence that we trusted them.)

We did not abandon Berlin, partly because we did not want to expose the heroic anti-communist Germans of the city to reprisals, and partly because even then our withdrawal would have meant a serious loss of prestige. Such a loss of prestige has immediate repercussions in the political life of the western world. If we finally abandon Berlin now, it must be expected that the Russian pressure upon Vienna will increase, that the communists of Italy and France will start a new wave of strikes, and that Finland will be subjected to new pressures.

The situation in Berlin is, in short, a nice indication of the desperate character of the struggle between Russia and the West. The slightest miscalculation on either side might mean war. Our yielding under pressure for the sake of peace would certainly mean war when Russia felt itself powerful enough to wage it. For years the peace of the world will have to be maintained, if it is maintained, by a political and strategic program, designed to hold back the Russian ideological and military power, until such time as it will be clear that the western world has enough health and strength to ward off the Russian power. It is of course still possible that the western world will

not develop either the health or the strength to do that. Our peace therefore remains very precarious. Our nerves may not be strong enough to stand that kind of peace. But a better peace is not available to us. The complete irrelevance of the ambitious plans for world government are proved by the fact that the two sides hardly trust each other sufficiently to be able to bargain on any level. World government presupposes sufficient mutual trust to prompt a potential minority in a world community to deliver its fate into the hands of a potential majority. Such a situation is clearly beyond the realm of present possibilities.

Considering the precarious character of our peace, and the daily alarms which disturb it, the most important problem for the western world has become a spiritual one. Can a culture so long accustomed to historic successes learn to live in a situation of historic frustration? Can a generation, expecting a Kingdom of God on earth, accustom itself to the modest task of preventing the world from degenerating into a hell? Can we learn to do God's will in a situation in which alternative choices are more obviously than ever before choices between evils and not between pure good and pure evil?

Evading the Issue

Mr. Brownell, the campaign manager for Mr. Dewey, is certain that the communist infiltration into our government is a much more important issue than rising costs. This judgment is a nice indication of the social wisdom which may be expected from the Dewey administration. Actually the fact that the nation with the greatest productive power is involved in inflation, because it can not produce enough to satisfy the demands of consumers, is proof of the fact that a free economy can not have full employment without inflation. The only way that an inflationary spiral can be checked in such an economy is by the "bust" which follows the "boom." The bust develops when a sufficient number of consumers have been priced out of the market by high costs.

In our present situation the European Recovery Program takes up the slack which might develop through the operation of the market. There is therefore no "bust" in sight. Since organized labor has sufficient power to ride the inflationary spiral it will not suffer too much. The real problem for us is therefore the increasing injustice to all fixed income groups. High prices in America will result in the impoverishment of the middle classes, particularly the professional salaried classes.

The Republicans are not anxious to have the nation scrutinize their record of trying to fasten the evils of a free and unregulated economy upon our nation. Instead they want to center upon the issue of communist infiltration into government positions. That issue is 75% fake. The other 25% represents a real problem, but not one upon which to fight a national election. In trying to make this the dominant issue the Republicans are following an impulse which has actuated ruling oligarchies in the period of their decay through many centuries. It is the impulse to deflect attention from the evils of their rule by calling attention to the excesses of those who are in rebellion against them.

The Kinsey Report

We are publishing in this issue a searching criticism of the assumptions which underly the Kinsey report on the sexual behaviour of males in our country. The author of this criticism, Dr. Henry Elkin, is a social psychologist who understands, as do few American social scientists, how easily modern social science is tempted to betray the essentially human in the human scene by presuppositions drawn from the natural sciences. Thus the assumptions of Professor Kinsey, in dealing with the problems of sex, become even more disturbing than the data on American sex life.

We are frankly disturbed by some of Mr. Elkin's own assumptions. He seems to equate Protestantism with an unimaginative legalism. Actually the genius of Protestantism lies in its rejection of legalism. It

must be admitted however that the strong Puritan tradition in our own country, particularly in the realm of sexual ethics, gives considerable validity to Mr. Elkin's viewpoint. The fact is that both Catholicism and Protestantism have dealt with the sex life of man in terms of such an arid legalism that they have contributed to the naturalistic revolt, of which both the data and the assumptions of the Kinsey report are evidence. There is no salvation for man, whether in the realm of sex or any other

field of ethics in either the moral relativism of the Kinsey report or the moral legalism with which Christian thought is frequently equated. Man is a creature endowed with a unique freedom. That freedom is the occasion of both his creativity and his sin. The final cure for sin is not law but grace. Real grace does not annul law but fulfills it. In the realm of sex the problem is how to bring creative restraints upon a powerful impulse so that it will contribute to, and not destroy, fellowship between persons.

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THE SEXUAL CRISIS OF OUR TIME: The Meaning of the Kinsey Report

By HENRY ELKIN

I

The spectacular public response and the widespread influence provoked by the "Kinsey Report" have made of it an invaluable social document that throws light on the deeper psychic forces and the ideal values that determine the course of cultural development in our time.

The Kinsey phenomenon has generally been accounted for by reference to its "startling revelations." This, however, does not explain it. Why were the purported facts so "startling," and why were they so avidly seized upon as "revealing"? Unpleasant truths about human nature normally meet with indifference or arouse defensive protest. That the Kinsey Report came as a revelation shows that its disclosures were not unpleasing, and doubtless highly gratifying, to large numbers of American men.

The zealous concern with male sexual practices clearly suggests that individual men have been secretly troubled by their own erotic tendencies. Ordinarily, they might never admit many of these tendencies even to themselves, unless after painful and prolonged delving into their unconscious. The Kinsey Report, however, has indirectly put the individual in touch with his own psychic depths by focusing his attention upon covert male practices in society at large. Thus it brings about psychic catharsis, not unlike that evoked in the spectator who releases his inner tensions by identifying himself with the characters in a play or novel.

But the cathartic process in great art or in properly effective psycho-analysis differs in an important respect from that effected by the Kinsey Report. With the former, the moral feeling provoked by asocial behavior is intensified and leads to the problem of the regeneration of personality. In

Kinsey, however, all forms of illicit and abnormal behavior, from masturbation to sodomy, are presented as typical of a majority or of numerically important minorities, and, by a convenient transfer of biological and political principles to moral life, the "typical" becomes "natural," "normal," and "right." One can well envisage readers of Kinsey who feel themselves to be "abnormal" or cravenly "inhibited" by *not* engaging in practices which the human race, for excellent reasons, has come to regard as loathsome and degrading. Though its effect may not often reach this extreme, the Kinsey Report is clearly promoting a transformation of moral values, both by removing moral feeling from the realm of sexuality, and by shifting the criterion of morality from personal ideals to collective norms, with implications that go far beyond the realm of sex.

However, if sexual tendencies are so repressed, a transformation of moral values is certainly in order. For human beings can only achieve inner peace and a creative personal life by integrating their unconscious drives with their conscious desires. But the moral values that could bring this about must be based on a broader knowledge of human nature than of merely its biological aspects, however important these may be. It is only in the light of such knowledge that we can understand the oppressive sexual tensions so characteristic of our time, as well as the full significance of Kinsey's impact on the public mind.

All modern discussion of sex must be viewed against the historic background of Puritanism. The puritan conception of human nature as inherently depraved and the puritan ethic of repression have had over four centuries in which to mold a deep-seated unconscious bed where even

the most outwardly diverse sexual values have their roots.

Open revolt against Puritanism inevitably takes the form of naturalism. Thus the twentieth-century sexual revolt, a belated reflection of the eighteenth-century political revolution, has merely transposed to the more intimate realm of sex the time-honored slogans of natural-rights philosophy: nature is good and man is born free, but he will fulfill his natural freedom only when human reason will have removed the shackles of ancient ignorance and superstition.

This philosophy of freedom, the opposite pole to Puritanism, is equally false. Its pretended naturalism is, in truth, mere sentimentality. Thus the writers who proclaimed the "new freedom" between the sexes confused natural sexuality with the cultivated "art of sex." This confusion has befuddled the minds of the literate classes and is the immediate background to the sexual disorder of our time.

For the art of sex is not natural at all. Art, like religion or philosophy, does not stem from biological but from spiritual needs, and from the peculiar human faculty of spiritual love which uses natural qualities, stone, color, sound, or biological instinct, as its means of expression. Those reared in a puritan tradition, by learning to hate nature and to curb their natural instincts, repressed their faculty of spiritual love and were no more capable of authentic art than of authentic religion or philosophy. Thus the "art of sex," as propagated by innumerable guides to "successful marriage," was conceived in the same terms of false sentimentality and mechanical technique that had long characterized the more formal arts. But whereas literary realism came into vogue over a generation ago, realism in sexual theory has only now emerged with Kinsey. And again it appears at first blush as a somewhat acrid but salutary wind that sweeps away moldering illusions to lay bare the primary truths.

Sexual values reflect the relations between the sexes, and changes in these values im-

ply changes in the character of this relation. The "art of sex" bespoke the desire for a blissful harmony between man and woman. The man was responsible for achieving this harmony by reason of being the more desirous and active partner. He was to succeed, even in cases of marked incompatibility, by his practiced skill and technical refinement. In reality, the man's conscious preoccupation with technique only repressed his natural virility, and too often brought less satisfaction to the woman's erotic nature than to her vanity. Hence men have harkened to Kinsey as the prophet who delivers them from frustration and inadequacy by proclaiming the rights of the long disowned "male animal."

But the release of the "male animal" cannot bring harmony between man and woman. Such harmony, in fact, is impossible on the basis of naturalism. For the human female has no instinctive urge to copulate. Her *vaginal* erotic desire, and pleasure, depends solely on psychic factors and may be entirely absent—a phenomenon that has no counterpart in the human male or in the female of any other species. Thus nature has entrusted human procreation to male animality and to a unique anatomical structure that permits rape. That rape is the "natural" form of human sexuality is the elemental fact on which all valid discussion must be based.

Human beings, however, are not only natural but spiritual creatures. And when the human spirit develops freely, man and woman have a spiritual need of one another. Then man is no longer primarily a male animal who seeks "sexual objects" for the "release of genital tension," but a full human being who seeks a permanent spiritual and physical union with his mate. Sexual desire then involves not only the body and the genitalia as in animals, but also the quite unnatural, human attributes of facial expression, speech, laughter, and tears. And the sexual union is not only of bodily organs and fluids, in which the male impregnates the female, but is a communion, or *communion*, in which each

fecundates the spirit of the other. Thus human sexuality, by enriching the personality, has the spiritual function of creation over and above the natural function of procreation.

The synthesis of natural drives and spiritual desires is the ideal implied by the conception of sexual love that developed from the Christian roots of western history and found expression in its great artistic achievements. The Reformation, however, denied the possibility of this synthesis, and hence regarded sex as pure animality, devoid of spirit. The puritan reformers, moreover, narrowed the conception of the human spirit to the intellect and the practical will, by which men could subdue the evil forces of nature both within and without themselves. This puritanical narrowing of life, to be sure, could not for long shackle the fullness of the human spirit. But puritanism so discredited sexuality that spiritual feelings flowed into ethereal and abstract forms of religion, philosophy, art, and love, which no longer expressed the total personality. And this disintegration of the human spirit, once started, proceeded to where spiritual feelings were completely severed from flesh and blood, and thereby lost all trace of reality. They either disappeared completely behind a facade of arid intellectualism or their inherent falsity gave rise to the mawkishness and sentimentality that but lately characterized all forms of religion and art, and which still enters into our image of romantic love.

Kinsey's naturalism, the converse of romantic sentimentality, is essentially a throw-back to old puritan tradition. Like the first reformers, he expressly treats sex as pure animality and denies the possibility of sublimation (or, "transfiguration," by which term the synthesis of natural drives and spiritual desires has been perhaps less ambiguously understood for two thousand years). The difference is merely in the reversal of value-judgment: what the Puritans considered evil, Kinsey considers good. Hence the Kinsey Report is simply inverted Puritanism, a revolt of the repressed side of the Puritan soul.

In regard to the relation between the sexes, the Kinsey Report is likewise merely a new version of the old puritan derogation of femininity. Puritanism, abetted by its offspring, modern capitalism, not only narrowed the human spirit to intellect and will but directed these faculties to the realm of material production as possessing the highest worldly value. This implied the disparagement of the more feminine spiritual faculties of feeling and intuition as well as of the intimate realm where they are pre-eminent, the home and the rearing of children. Thus women found themselves in a world in which puritan sexuality degraded them to the role of "sexual objects" and in which their creative faculties, so essential for the development of personality, were considered of minor importance. And as their femininity made them into inferior beings, they sought to gain self-respect by a semblance of masculine qualities. Soon middle-class women came to dominate the materially unprofitable spheres that men had left over to them. In the home, church, and school, where they molded personality in the formative years, they sought by every means to repress the natural foundations of future manhood. For as they themselves were degraded by sex and boorish virility, they inevitably viewed sex and virility themselves as bestial and degrading. It appeared in time that they had succeeded in castrating the male animal, especially in the literate middle-classes who were most under their influence. World War II, however, seems to have brought a masculine counter-attack in this piteous and unnecessary war between the sexes. First came Wylie's attack on "Momism," followed by Lundberg and Farnham's assault on feminism, and now comes Kinsey's oblique but more subtly devastating onslaught against the hollow foundations of the modern woman's self-respect.

But Kinsey is less the defender of men's animal instincts than of the repressed spiritual tendencies that have deformed these instincts. For man's sexual drives never stem from pure animality but always involve a spiritual evaluation of the "sexual

object." And the human spirit, especially in high cultures, is strong enough to pervert man's instinctive drive towards women. The cultures of Greece and Rome show conclusively that a positive spiritual evaluation of masculinity without a counter-balancing appreciation of femininity will lead to the homosexual erotisation of the masculine image. Puritan and capitalistic values likewise provoked homosexual tendencies but simultaneously repressed them. Thus they came to be revealed only in the veiled forms of exaggerated virility, acute sensitiveness to the conventional symbols of effeminacy, and in the social institutions of men's clubs, bars, gymnasiums, and group sports that have largely arisen to abet men's greatest joy, drinking, "horse-play," and other forms of close intimacy with "the boys."

The inner conflicts that were roused by this cultural pattern sought relief in a compromise, the desire for a woman as a "pal"; i.e., the image of woman as parallel rather than as complementary to man. That this compromise is linked to perverse sexual tendencies is shown by the erotic idealization of the masculine woman. The monstrously long-legged, slim-hipped "pin-ups," the "glamour girls" with rapacious, predatory look, and the "pistol-packing mamas," even when they are deceptively provided with imposing breastwork, all suggest the hermaphroditic image of the "woman with the penis." The men's early experience with "Moms" who behaved as though they possessed the virile organ may often have ruled out femininity as the complement to their own erotic tendencies. In any case, the image of woman as parallel to man has no foundation in nature, and this aberrancy cannot endure forever. In fact, we now seem to have reached a turning-point. On the one hand, women have taken on the "new look," partly in an effort to preserve their psychic integrity. And on the other, numerous subtle extenuations of male homosexuality are beginning to appear. The final outcome of this hidden

conflict is crucial for the future of our world.*

The Kinsey Report, by seeming to defend the "male animal," more truly defends the man with homosexual tendencies who wishes to consider himself normal. Kinsey notably treats homosexuality as a "natural" form of "sexual outlet," and lumps under this label both the confirmed pervert and the adolescent who once engaged in mutual masturbation. More profoundly significant, however, is his general treatment of male sexuality as the seeking after "sexual objects." For the man who is impervious to the spiritual charms of femininity perforce regards women as but one "form" of "sexual object" that, by "democratic choice," may or may not be preferred to other possible "forms." It is noteworthy, moreover, that the Kinsey rage followed in the wake of the "new look." It may therefore be viewed as a further conscious accentuation of sex differences, and, in large part, as a masculine reaction against women's attempt to arouse their spiritual appreciation of femininity.

In this context the meaning of Kinsey's constant deprecation of "Judeo-Christian morality" becomes very clear. Armed with his pretended naturalism, he seeks to wipe out the vestiges of Christian tradition and to revert to a cultural pattern like that of the Roman Empire, where homosexuality was considered normal, both men and women competed for the sexual favors of men, and the idealized erotic images were those of the gladiator and the active, predatory prostitute. It is disheartening to recognize that the modern counterparts of these images have already appeared in the "supermen" and "jungle women" of our comic books. The latter are the most freely imaginative and so perhaps the most revelatory expressions of our inner cultural aspirations and ideals.

The Kinsey Report is but another in-

* Significantly, popular novelists have begun to deal with the theme of repressed male homosexuality; viz, Charles Jackson, *The Fall of Valor*; Stuart Engstrand, *The Sling and the Arrow*; Guy Vidal, *The City and the Pillar*.

stance of the role of scientific naturalism in promoting a regression to the sadism and barbarism of the pre-Christian world. Kinsey's assertion that sex is "natural" is, of course, no more valid than the Nazis' assertion that violence and domination are "natural." Moreover, the implications of both are strikingly similar: the glorification of the "male animal," the approbation of male homosexuality, and the treatment of women as "sexual objects." A heightened "social consciousness" (i.e., collective consciousness) would doubtless suffice to make explicit the incontrovertible "scientific" argument for using women for breeding purposes: if sexual desire aims merely to release genital tension, it should surely not be permitted to hinder the amelioration of the human species by eugenically controlled childbirth. Clearly, once naturalism sets in, the human spirit is disowned. And the individual, even when he possesses the highest intellectual powers, sees himself as a mere focus of natural and collective forces.

The only way to overcome perverse masculine tendencies is to rehabilitate man's image of femininity. That is, our modern world must again learn to venerate the image of *Woman*. In our past it was the cult of the Madonna, Virgin and Mother, that, in Dante's words, "ennobled natural man." Modern culture has perverted and repressed this natural man. Kinsey, among others, is seeking to liberate him. If western civilization is to continue through the end of the second millenium, the image of *Woman* must again, as in the beginning, ennoble *Man*.

II

The Kinsey phenomenon inevitably raises the crucial problem of the social function of science and the social role of the intelligentsia. For it is proof, if more were needed, that "science" is the modern gospel, "scientists" are its priests and moralists, and the university centers of research are where the sacred mysteries of the universe are revealed. Kinsey's "revelation" could not have been produced by an ordin-

ary book, but only by one garbed in the dreary trappings and uncouth verbal liturgy of "scientific research," and presented under the holy auspices of the National Research Council and the Rockefeller Foundation.

To be sure, the Report does give far richer data, despite the limited and unrepresentative character of its sample population, than have the previous statistical studies of sexual behavior. This information, however, like so much of the data that is expensively and laboriously collected by "social science research," does little more than confirm the knowledge that any keenly interested and open-minded observer may obtain by simply living in our society. But had this work merely aimed to present controlled information on sexual behavior, it would, among other things, have been more circumspect in purporting to give the distribution of sexual practices in the United States, and would have been entitled, "A Research on the Sexual Behavior of 5300 White, American Men," in place of the grossly misleading, "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male."

The true function of the data, only too well demonstrated, is to serve as "scientific facts" for promoting a revolution in sexual values and mores.* Kinsey's vaunted objectivity, reiterated *ad nauseam*, to the effect that his work is a "thoroughly objective fact-finding investigation . . . completely divorced from questions of moral value and social custom," does not prevent him from constantly making dubious assumptions, offering unfounded conclusions, and from criticizing, in often puerile and offensive tones, all phases of morality and social custom. But it is clear that Kinsey is unaware of any contradiction. He considers human sexuality as a purely biological phenomenon and claims to have rendered full justice to objectivity by not passing judgment on any particular form of sexual activity. To attack "ancient ignorance and superstition,"

* A commentary on Kinsey opens with, "The Kinsey Report has done for sex what Columbus did for geography." Cf: *American Sexual Behavior and the Kinsey Report*, by Morris L. Ernst and David Loth. Greystone Press, N. Y. 1948.

however, which perversely continues to apply moral "taboos" to the various "sexual outlets," merely serves to promote a "healthy" and "enlightened" attitude based on "scientific facts." Thus, the spectacular response to his Report only signified for him that "the public was ready to accept scientific discussion of sex as freely and openly as we have." *

It is characteristic of our scientists to deny vigorously that they engage in propaganda. Thus their seeming naivete betrays a degree of moral irresponsibility that is equalled only by our political economic elites. We painfully recall the tremendous role played by "social science" in the ideological unpreparedness for the last war as well as in the failure to guide war-time policy in the direction of enduring peace. And now Kinsey, a *de facto* social scientist, is engaged in a similarly destructive role, albeit in a new direction.

Such irresponsibility is the inevitable out-

* N. Y. Times, March 14, 1948.

come of the methods for selecting and training our academic elite. Kinsey is an excellent example of the fact that they are often mere specialists and technicians. And when they arrogate to themselves the role of social interpreters, their uncultivated and repressed personal tendencies burst forth and they then proceed to engage in intellectual sleight-of-hand with no more awareness than a sleep-walker.

If it is claimed that specialists and technicians are as necessary in modern intellectual life as in government or business, one must nevertheless recognize that they are capable only of the more menial tasks in these professions and should properly be subordinated to those who possess the moral and intellectual qualifications necessary to guide the selection of facts, to interpret them, and to determine policy. In this light it is clear that along with financial support, the Kinsey Project should have been provided, perhaps in the form of a well-chosen committee, with the guidance and control of judicious minds.

A CONFERENCE ON THE CELL GROUP

Franklin Littell has asked us to call attention to a conference on the cell group, scheduled to meet at Lane Hall, University of Michigan, on October 23. Speakers include D. Elton Trueblood, John Oliver Nelson, Ross Snyder, and Arthur Morgan, as well as several well known discussion

leaders. Since the subject has been discussed at recent Fellowship Conferences, many of our subscribers may be interested. A report on the conference will be available after its conclusion and may be secured from Dr. Littell, Lane Hall, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

THE CHURCH AND THE DISORDER OF SOCIETY

The Amsterdam Report

The report of Section III as adopted by the World Council of Churches, Amsterdam, Holland, September, 1948, follows.

I. The Disorder of Society

The world today is experiencing a social crisis of unparalleled proportions. The deepest root of that disorder is the refusal of men to see and admit that their responsibility to God stands over and above their loyalty to any earthly community and their obedience to any worldly power. Our modern society, in which religious traditions and family life have been weakened, and which is for the most part secular in its outlook, underestimates both the depth of evil in human nature and the full height of freedom and dignity in the children of God.

The Christian Church approaches the disorder of our society with faith in the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In Him God has established His Kingdom and its gates stand open for all who will enter. Their lives belong to God with a certainty that no disorder of society can destroy, and on them is laid the duty to seek God's Kingdom and His righteousness.

In the light of that Kingdom, with its judgment and mercy, Christians are conscious of the sins which corrupt human communities and institutions in every age, but they are also assured of the final victory over all sin and death through Christ. It is He who has bidden us pray that God's Kingdom may come and that His will may be done on earth as it is in Heaven; and our obedience to that command requires that we seek in every age to overcome the specific disorders which aggravate the perennial evil in human societies, and that we search out the means of securing their elimination or control.

Men are often disillusioned by finding

that changes of particular systems do not bring unqualified good, but fresh evils. New temptations to greed and power arise even in systems more just than those they have replaced because sin is ever present in the human heart. Many, therefore, lapse into apathy, irresponsibility and despair. The Christian faith leaves no room for such despair, being based on the fact that the Kingdom of God is firmly established in Christ and will come by God's act despite all human failure.

Two chief factors contribute to the crisis of our age. One of these is the vast concentrations of power—which are under capitalism mainly economic and under Communism both economic and political. In such conditions, social evil is manifest on the largest scale not only in the greed, pride and cruelty of persons and groups; but also in the momentum or inertia of huge organizations of men, which diminish their ability to act as moral and accountable beings. To find ways of realizing personal responsibility for collective action in the large aggregations of power in modern society is a task which has not yet been undertaken seriously.

The second factor is that society, as a whole dominated as it is by technics, is likewise more controlled by a momentum of its own than in previous periods. While it enables men the better to use nature, it has the possibilities of destruction, both through war and through the undermining of the natural foundations of society in family, neighborhood and craft. It has collected men into great industrial cities and has deprived many societies of those forms of association in which men can grow most fully as persons. It has accentuated the tendency in men to waste God's gift to them in the soil and in other natural resources.

On the other hand, technical develop-

ments have relieved men and women of much drudgery and poverty, and are still capable of doing more. There is a limit to what they can do in this direction. Large parts of the world, however, are far from that limit. Justice demands that the inhabitants of Asia and Africa, for instance, should have the benefits of more machine production. They may learn to avoid the mechanization of life and the other dangers of an unbalanced economy which impair the social health of the older industrial peoples. Technical progress also provides channels of communication and interdependence which can be aids to fellowship, though closer contact may also produce friction.

There is no inescapable necessity for society to succumb to undirected developments of technology, and the Christian Church has an urgent responsibility today to help men to achieve fuller personal life within the technical society.

In doing so the Churches should not forget to what extent they themselves have contributed to the very evils which they are tempted to blame wholly on the secularization of society. While they have raised up many Christians who have taken the lead in movements of reform, and while many of them have come to see in a fresh way the relevance of their faith to the problems of society, and the imperative obligations thus laid upon them, they share responsibility for the contemporary disorder. Our churches have often given religious sanction to the special privileges of dominant classes, races and political groups, and so they have been obstacles to changes necessary in the interests of social justice and political freedom. They have often concentrated on a purely spiritual or otherworldly or individualistic interpretation of their message and their responsibility. They have often failed to understand the forces which have shaped society around them, and so they have been unprepared to deal creatively with new problems as they have arisen in technical civilization; they have often neglected the effects of industrialization on agricultural communities.

II. *Economic and Political Organization*

In the industrial revolution economic activity was freed from previous social controls and outgrew its modest place in human life. It created the vast network of financial, commercial and industrial relations which we know as the capitalist order. In all parts of the world new controls have in various degrees been put upon the free play of economic forces, but there are economic necessities which no political system can afford to defy. In our days, for instance, the need for stability in the value of money, for creation of capital and for incentives in production, is inescapable and world-wide. Justice, however, demands that economic activities be subordinated to social ends. It is intolerable that vast millions of people be exposed to insecurity, hunger and frustration by periodic inflation or depression.

The Church cannot resolve the debate between those who feel that the primary solution is to socialize the means of production, and those who fear that such a course will merely lead to new and inordinate combinations of political and economic power, culminating finally in an omnicompetent State. In the light of the Christian understanding of man we must, however, say to the advocates of socialization that the institution of property is not the root of the corruption of human nature. We must equally say to the defenders of existing property relations that ownership is not an unconditional right; it must, therefore, be preserved, curtailed or distributed in accordance with the requirements of justice.

On the one hand we must vindicate the supremacy of persons over purely technical considerations by subordinating all economic processes and cherished rights to the needs of the community as a whole. On the other hand, we must preserve the possibility of a satisfying life for "little men in big societies." We must prevent abuse of authority and keep open as wide a sphere as possible in which men can have direct and responsible relations with each other as persons.

Coherent and purposeful ordering of society has now become a major necessity. Here governments have responsibilities which they must not shirk. But centres of initiative in economic life must be so encouraged as to avoid placing too great a burden upon centralized judgment and decision. To achieve religious, cultural, economic, social and other ends it is of vital importance that society should have a rich variety of smaller forms of community, in local government, within industrial organizations, including trade unions, through the development of public corporations, and through voluntary associations. By such means it is possible to prevent an undue centralization of power in modern technically organized communities, and thus escape the perils of tyranny while avoiding the dangers of anarchy.

III. *The Responsible Society*

Man is created and called to be a free being, responsible to God and his neighbor. Any tendencies in State and society depriving man of the possibility of acting responsibly are a denial of God's intention for man and His work of salvation. A responsible society is one where freedom is the freedom of men who acknowledge responsibility to justice and public order, and where those who hold political authority or economic power are responsible for its exercise to God and the people whose welfare is affected by it.

Men must never be made a mere means for political or economic ends. Man is not made for the State but the State for man. Man is not made for production, but production for man. For a society to be responsible under modern conditions it is required that the people have freedom to control, to criticize and to change their governments, that power be made responsible by law and tradition, and be distributed as widely as possible through the whole community. It is required that economic justice and provision of equality of opportunity be established for all the members of society.

We therefore condemn:

(a) Any attempt to limit the freedom of the Church to witness to its Lord and His design for mankind and any attempt to impair the freedom of men to obey God and to act according to conscience, for those freedoms are implied in man's responsibility before God;

(b) Any denial to man of an opportunity to participate in the shaping of society, for this is a duty implied in man's responsibility towards his neighbor;

(c) Any attempt to prevent men from learning and spreading the truth.

IV. *Communism and Capitalism*

Christians should ask why Communism in its modern totalitarian form makes so strong an appeal to great masses of people in many parts of the world. They should recognize the hand of God in the revolt of multitudes against injustice that gives Communism much of its strength. They should seek to recapture for the Church the original Christian solidarity with the world's distressed people, not to curb their aspirations towards justice, but, on the contrary, to go beyond them and direct them towards the only road which does not lead to a blank wall, obedience to God's will and His justice. Christians should realize that for many, especially for many young men and women, Communism seems to stand for a vision of human equality and universal brotherhood for which they were prepared by Christian influences. Christians who are beneficiaries of Capitalism should try to see the world as it appears to many who know themselves excluded from its privileges and who see in Communism a means of deliverance from poverty and insecurity. All should understand that the proclamation of racial equality by Communists and their support of the cause of colonial peoples makes a strong appeal to the populations of Asia and Africa and to racial minorities elsewhere. It is a great human tragedy that so much that is good in the motives and aspirations of many Communists and of those whose sympathies they win has been transformed into a force that engenders new forms of injustice and oppres-

sion, and that what is true in Communist criticism should be used to give convincing power to untrustworthy propaganda.

Christians should recognize with contrition that many Churches are involved in the forms of economic injustice and racial discrimination which have created the conditions favorable to the growth of Communism, and that the atheism and the anti-religious teaching of Communism are in part a reaction to the chequered record of a professedly Christian society. It is one of the most fateful facts in modern history that often the working classes, including tenant farmers, came to believe that the Churches were against them or indifferent to their plight. Christians should realize that the Church has often failed to offer to its youth the appeal that can evoke a disciplined, purposeful, and sacrificial response, and that in this respect, Communism has for many filled a moral and psychological vacuum.

The points of conflict between Christianity and the atheistic Marxian Communism of our day are as follows: (1) the Communist promise of what amounts to a complete redemption of man in history; (2) the belief that a particular class by virtue of its role as the bearer of a new order is free from the sins and ambiguities that Christians believe to be characteristic of all human existence; (3) the materialistic and deterministic teachings, however they may be qualified, that are incompatible with belief in God and with the Christian belief in man as a person, made in God's image and responsible to Him; (4) the ruthless methods of Communists in dealing with their opponents; (5) the demand of the party on its members for an exclusive and unqualified loyalty which belongs only to God, and the coercive policies of Communist dictatorship in controlling every aspect of life.

The Church should seek to resist the extension of any system that not only includes oppressive elements but fails to provide any means by which the victims of oppression may criticize or act to correct it. It is a part of the mission of the Church

to raise its voice of protest wherever men are the victims of terror, wherever they are denied such fundamental human rights as the right to be secure against arbitrary arrest, and wherever governments use torture and cruel punishments to intimidate consciences of men.

The Church should make clear that there are conflicts between Christianity and Capitalism. The developments of Capitalism vary from country to country and often the exploitation of the workers that was characteristic of early Capitalism has been corrected in considerable measure by the influence of trade unions, social legislation and responsible management. But (1) Capitalism tends to subordinate what should be the primary task of any economy—the meeting of human needs—to the economic advantages of those who have most power over its institutions. (2) It tends to produce serious inequalities. (3) It has developed a practical form of materialism in western nations in spite of their Christian background, for it has placed the greatest emphasis upon success in making money. (4) It has also kept the people of capitalist countries subject to a kind of fate which has taken the form of such social catastrophes as mass unemployment.

The Christian Churches should reject the ideologies of both Communism and laissez-faire Capitalism, and should seek to draw men away from the false assumption that these extremes are the only alternatives. Each has made promises which it could not redeem. Communist ideology puts the emphasis upon economic justice, and promises that freedom will come automatically after the completion of the revolution. Capitalism puts the emphasis upon freedom, and promises that justice will follow as a by-product of free enterprise; that, too, is an ideology which has been proved false. It is the responsibility of Christians to seek new creative solutions which never allow either justice or freedom to destroy the other.

V. The Social Function of the Church

The greatest contribution that the Church

can make to the renewal of society is for it to be renewed in its own life in faith and obedience to its Lord. Such inner renewal includes a clearer grasp of the meaning of the Gospel for the whole life of men. This renewal must take place both in the larger units of the Church and in the local congregations. The influence of worshipping congregations upon the problems of society is very great when those congregations include people from many social groups. If the Church can overcome the national and social barriers which now divide it, it can help society to overcome those barriers.

This is especially clear in the case of racial distinction. It is here that the Church has failed most lamentably, where it has reflected and then by its example sanctified the racial prejudice that is rampant in the world. And yet it is here that today its guidance concerning what God wills for it is especially clear. It knows that it must call society away from prejudice based upon race and color, and from the practices of discrimination and segregation as denials of justice and human dignity, but it cannot say a convincing word to society unless it takes steps to eliminate these from the Christian community because they contradict all that it believes about God's love for all His children.

There are occasions on which the Churches, through their councils or through such persons as they may commission to speak on their behalf, should declare directly what they see to be the will of God for the public decisions of the hour. Such guidance will often take the form of warnings against concrete forms of injustice or oppression or social idolatry. They should also point to the main objectives towards which a particular society should move.

One problem is raised by the existence in several countries of Christian political parties. The Church as such should not be identified with any political party, and it must not act as though it were itself a political party. In general, the formation of such parties is hazardous because they easily confuse Christianity with the in-

herent compromises of politics. They may cut Christians off from the other parties which need the leaven of Christianity, and they may consolidate all who do not share the political principles of the Christian party not only against that party but against Christianity itself. Nevertheless, it may still be desirable in some situations for Christians to organize themselves into a political party for specific objectives, so long as they do not claim that it is the only possible expression of Christian loyalty in the situation.

But the social influence of the Church must come primarily from its influence upon its members through constant teaching and preaching of Christian truth in ways that illuminate the historical conditions in which men live and the problems which they face. The Church can be most effective in society as it inspires its members to ask in a new way what their Christian responsibility is whenever they vote or discharge the duties of public office, whenever they influence public opinion, whenever they make decisions as employers or as workers or in any other vocation to which they may be called. One of the most creative developments in the contemporary Church is the practice of groups of Christians facing much the same problems in their occupations to pray and take counsel together in order to find out what they should do as Christians.

In discussing the social function of the Church, Christians should always remember the great variety of situations in which the Church lives. Nations in which professing Christians are in the majority, nations in which the Church represents only a few per cent of the population, nations in which the Church lives under a hostile and oppressive Government offer very different problems for the Church. It is one of the contributions of the ecumenical experience of recent years that Churches under these contrasting conditions have come not only to appreciate one another's practices, but to learn from one another's failures and achievements and sufferings.

VI. Conclusion

There is a great discrepancy between all that has been said here and the possibility of action in many parts of the world. Obedience to God will be possible under all external circumstances, and no one need despair when conditions restrict greatly the

area of responsible action. The responsible society of which we have spoken represents, however, the goal for which the Churches in all lands must work, to the glory of the one God and Father of all, and looking for the day of God and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

THE CHURCH'S NEW FREEDOM

By JUNIUS J. MARTIN

Every new situation in the life of civilization makes it necessary for the Church to reconsider its relation to civilization. The problem of the relationship of Christianity to civilization is not solved once and for all by abstracted universal principles which ignore the present moment nor yet by historical realizations which ignore the demands of a transcendent God.

The present situation calls for a reconsideration of that relationship. The Church found it difficult in the past to make the claim heard that it is unidentifiable with the achievements of civilization. This need not be so difficult in the present because the achievements of civilization which have contributed to human self-assurance no longer appear wholly unambiguous. It is fairly obvious now that the Church's proclamation of redemption is not to be confused with the promises which a particular civilization holds out. The questions which used to be asked concerning the future of the Church have changed into questions concerning the future of the world. This is not so much the result of renewed vigor on the part of the Christian community as it is man's inability to escape the works of his own hands. The question which the servants of Pharaoh asked out of their suffering and pain are heard again in the crucial events of the present, "Knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?" (Exodus 10:7).

I

The claim of the Church that its life is not to be identified with civilization is based on an awareness of the following considerations:

In the first place, the meaning and destiny of human existence cannot be realized within the limits of civil institutions. The transcendent nature of man impels him beyond the present order and disorder toward the fulfillment of a promise which can never be completely realized within history. "No ideal which is capable of realization in this world," writes Fr. Tyrell, "is capable of appeasing the heart of man, whose hunger is for a transcendent Kingdom, ruled by a transcendent God."¹

In the second place, all human achievements are transitory. No purely historical solution is ever final. History is, in one sense, the accumulation of solutions which have been shattered. This does not mean that history is meaningless, nor yet that the solutions have been unreal. It simply means that while time is the milieu in which solutions must take place, time itself will give birth to new challenges which require new responses.

In the third place, Christianity is an "unfinished" religion. God's act in Christ when received by faith is present deliverance, while at the same time faith looks

¹ Tyrell, *Christianity at the Crossroads*, p. ix.

forward to a final consummation of history symbolized by the Second Coming. Again this does not mean that Christianity is enclosed within the time series, but rather that time becomes meaningful in respect to the human response or rebellion to the First and Second Advent.

II

The Church has not always and everywhere been able to achieve the claim of separateness. Its affirmations have not had a corresponding historical realization. In order to gain the approval of a particular civilization, the Church has not been able to transcend its environment. "When the Church was regarded, not as *a* society, but as society itself, it was inevitably diluted by the mass which it absorbed."²

Where men and women have sought to discover the meaning of their lives in terms of the values of civilized life, the Church has sought to justify its existence on grounds which have been acceptable to the civilization. The Church, therefore, either claims a stake in the civilization on the grounds of ancestral rights, or it claims to contribute to the potential of the civilization, or it claims to make men better members of that civilization.

Now the new situation in civilization which calls for a reconsideration of the relation of Christianity to civilization certainly released the Church from the necessity to defend itself in the ways which have just been mentioned. This is not to say that the relation between the two has been severed, but it means that the Church is free to be the Church without entangling alliances.

III

Before considering the meaning of the freedom which comes to the Church because of the new situation, it needs to be reasserted that the relation of Christianity to civilization does not follow a fixed order. A change either in theological understanding, such as, for example, that which took

place at the Reformation; or a change in the historical situation, such as, for example, that which took place at the fall of Rome in 410 A.D., changes the problem of the relationship. Thus, in part as a result of recent theological understanding, but also, and perhaps primarily, because of historical change in the recent past, the civilization in which we live is no longer regarded, as it was formerly, as permanent and progressive, but it is threatened by a destruction which is the result of its most formidable scientific achievement.

Since the publication of Spengler's *The Decline of the West* unto the recent publication of Toynbee's *A Study of History*, different as their particular theses may be, Western man has had to consider the possibility, at least theoretically, that the order in which he lives is not fixed on the safest and surest foundations. It is quite possible that civilizations are cyclical (Spengler), being born, waxing, waning, and then dying, or that the challenge (Toynbee) to civilization, whether from within or without, may be so great that man may not have what it takes to respond in an adequate manner. The Christian Church is committed to neither thesis, but they both bear witness to the truth which Christianity affirms, that the seeds of rebirth and renewal are not inherent in civilization as such.

It is not, however, primarily from reading books historians have written that modern man has become aware of the threat to his own civilization. He has participated in events which deny the realization of his deepest needs and his highest hopes. National self-sufficiency and self-determination is no longer the relatively simple matter that it was in view of the possible military use of atomic energy. The political problems of international relations do not seem to submit to the Tennysonian vision of "the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World." Man no longer trusts in the promises and hopes which his civilization holds out. An interesting commentary on what has happened is revealed in a comparison of a slogan which was recently proposed

² Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, Penguin edition, p. 57.

for use by the Republican Party in this election year with that of the same party in 1928. We have come a long way from "Two chickens in every pot and two cars in every garage" to "Save what is left."

IV

What is the significance of this new situation for the Christian Church?

In the first place it is no longer necessary for the Church to justify itself in terms of the values which the civilization recognizes. In fact, to do that would be to sacrifice all hope. It would mean that the Church has accepted the judgment of civilization concerning its own destiny and therefore a repudiation of the conviction that "the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

Modern man no longer questions the Church; he questions the promises and expectations of civilization. This may mean, of course, that the witness of the Church to a redemption both contemporary and eternal has made no significant impression on the heart of man. The fact that civilization rather than the Church is questioned may mean that modern man can give up the promises which the Church holds out because he has already given them up. The questioning of the promises of civilization may represent a concern to wrest from it enough to give human existence the significance it needs. However that may be, the Church cannot remain indifferent to the situation. If modern man is indifferent to the Church it is not now, as it may have been formerly, that he has discovered satisfaction in the promises of civilization.

This provides, I believe, a real starting point for a meaningful apologetic. No longer is it necessary, or should the Church feel that it is necessary, to be concerned with its own life as confronted by the blessedness of a materialistic or secular civilization. The men and women who trusted in that kind of civilization trust it no more. The energies expended in polemics may now be turned into a positive witness to the Word. The Church now has the opportunity to set out to establish "a human

world that is subject to divine truth; to unite the way of earth with that of heaven."³

The new situation which prevails means also that the Church is now able to speak *to* and not *for* the civilization in which it lives. The reason for this is not so much that the Church has anything new or startling to say, but rather that a new opportunity for hearing has opened up. Man cannot hear God speak through the Church, at least he cannot hear the promise of salvation, when he is listening to the promises of that which he has himself created. The new situation is an historical, not merely a theoretical, indictment of idolatry. Since man is not so sure of the works of his hands, it may mean that the voice of God is not drowned out by the sound of purring machinery or the vision of Zion is not clouded by the radiation of molten steel.

The Church's freedom to speak to the civilization means that the Church is free to listen to Him who calls the Church into being and who promises to be with the Church even unto the end of the world. The bondage of the Church to civilization was the result of the severance of the Church from the source of its own life. The Church's message was hardly more than the echo of the expectations of the civilization.

A third thing which the Church's new freedom means, and this is perhaps the most important, is that it is now possible for the Church to be identified with civilization in a new and different way. The Church's freedom does not mean the absence of responsibility. The Church as a matter of fact is involved in the world. The Church must share the guilt for the alienation of mankind from God. The Church is not the Judge of civilization. The Church stands under the judgment of Him who is both Lord of the Church and the world.

The new and different way in which it is now possible for the Church to identify itself with civilization is the identification

³ Buber, *Moses*, pp. 82-83.

with its suffering. The imprisonment of the Church, its bondage, came and comes from a too easy identification with the values of civilization. The liberation of the Church comes and may come from an identification with the world's failures and its pain.

It may be said that only insofar as the Church does so identify its life with the fears and frustrations of the world can it speak its saving word. The suffering of the world—its anxiety and fears—is the compelling witness to the central drama of history: the opposition between God and His created world. It is the sign of the Cross displayed in the historical situation.

This is the drama which the Church knows by heart. It is the drama for which the Church has a name, the Cross and the Resurrection. It is the drama which has its beginning and its ending, insofar as this world is concerned, in the Christian Church, for it is in that community where the Will of God is made realistically known and where God Himself is striving victoriously over the world, Satan, and sin.

V

The new freedom of the Church which is born of the present situation does not necessarily mean that men are going to turn immediately from their allegiance to the values which their civilization promises to a faithful response to the proclamation of the Word. It does not mean that civilization will be replaced automatically by a divinely-given order in which pure motives will issue in pure acts which will issue in perfect harmony. So long as history exists the relation of the Church to civilization will be that of to-gether-ness and tension. The problem of their relationship will be such as to require reconsideration in the light of contemporary theological understanding as well as historic change. In this present time the lack of trust in the promises of civilization releases the Church from echoing false hopes, makes it possible for the Church to speak *to* and not *for* civilization, and provides the opportunity for the Church to identify itself with civilization by taking its place at the center of the conflict and by faith to realize the victory which overcomes the world.

RELIGION AND SECULARISM

By L. F. THORNTON, JR.

If all the world were Christian, then to be a true Christian one would have to become an atheist. The profound truth of this paraphrase of Kierkegaard needs to be kept in mind in any discussion of secularism. Religious writers and analysts must constantly guard against the subtle temptation to make secularism Christianity's Public Enemy No. 1.

An example of the tendency to make a straw man out of secularism is the easy assumption that secularism is the basic sickness of our time and religion is the cure. If this is true, then we need not be in anguish any longer. The victory is ours.

All we need to do is get the United Nations to declare Christianity the official religion of the world. On the other hand, if "Christianity is inversely proportionate to number,"¹ as Kierkegaard suggests, then our sickness is not secularism and the cure for our social ills is not a "return to religion." In this case, we should be skeptical of the newly acquired friends of Christianity who are eager for a crusade against irreligion.

There is great danger in subsuming Christianity under the word religion. Christianity is a faith which relates religion and

¹ Soren Kierkegaard, *Attack upon Christendom*. Princeton Univ. Press, 1944, p. 127.

life in a particular way. The doctrine of the Trinity sheds some light on what this relation may be. God, the creator of heaven and earth, insists that all things are under his dominion. Everything is religious nothing secular, because God created all things, but man he created in his own image. Man returned the compliment and created his own gods. Then God sent his Son to save men from the enslavement of their own gods, to save men from religion, if you please. In the crucifixion, the religion of law and cult committed suicide and the religious barriers between man and God were broken down. The resurrection created a new Holy Spirit freed from the old dichotomy between what is religion and what is not.

Belief in a Trinitarian God has certain practical implications. One of these concerns the mission emphasis of the church. During the period now characterized as the liberal era, the church had two main emphases, the evangelization of the world and the evangelization of society. Both of these were an attack on the problem of secularism, foreign missions directed externally and the social gospel internally. Both of these campaigns have had nominal success. The Christian influence is being felt in all parts of the world and all parts of the social scene. Both campaigns have now reached a point where there is increasing difficulty in basic orientation. It is rather curious that the new movement arising out of the frustration of the old missionary appeals should be called neo-orthodox, because it is directed toward this new problem facing the Christian mission rather than a simple return to orthodoxy in dogma and doctrine. Its primary concern is with religion, but not religion as set over against secularism.

The late Archbishop Temple was fond of saying that the only thing that is secular is sin. Both liberalism and neo-orthodoxy accept this as true, but it is not the generally accepted meaning of the word secular. Neither is secularism an adequate description of the biblical concept of sin. The Bible does not define sin as being "apart

from God" or "without religion." The first commandment says, "I am the Lord thy God," and the second defines sin as the worship of other gods. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." It is an interesting question whether being "apart from God" or "without religion" leads inevitably to sin, or is the necessary condition for man's freedom, as the French Existentialists claim. If it is both, and I think it is, then our point of attack cannot be on secularism as such, but only on its tendency to become an unconscious idolatry.

The question which the missionary movement of the church must face is, "Can Christianity get modern man to accept the God of Jesus Christ by assuming that modern man has no god and that our job is merely to get him to accept one?" I don't believe it can. The effect of such an approach will be that men will, in self-defense, be forced to state their religious assumptions. Perhaps this is a worthwhile accomplishment, but in the case of Hitler, at least, there seems little virtue in the fact that he stated his case openly and profited by the muteness of German Christianity. It is doubtful, however, whether an appeal for religion as an answer to society's sickness will achieve an exposing of the modern versions of ancient idols. The breakdown of modern civilization into internecine warfare is doing far more than we can hope to do in forcing men to state their faith, even if they won't examine it to see if it is an adequate faith. What is modern propaganda warfare, or cold war, as it is called, if not an evangelistic appeal for the idols of the various segments of world society?

The appalling fact is that modern idols have been, or are rapidly being, christened with Christian names, and with benefit of clergy. Witness Franco's fascism in Spain or the preaching of Gerald Winrod, Gerald L. K. Smith, or Father Coughlin, to mention only a few. From the N.A.M. on down, every powerful secular group in this country is using, or perverting, Christian ideas for its own ends. Nations are doing it no less, each with its own fragment of Christian truth.

It is quite possible to speak of a civilization as secular, meaning that it has lost its creativity. The manner in which this comes about is not simply the loss of religion. Externally a civilization which has lost its religious core will have more, rather than less, religion.

Secularism may be one or all of three things. First, it is being without religion. Second, it is a thin veneer for an unconscious and unexamined religion. Third, it is denial of currently accepted gods whose power has been destroyed or made demonic by literalization and institutionalization of the God of the prophets and Christ Jesus.

If secularism is being without religion in the sense that any absolute demand in life is denied, it has little power either as an enemy or a friend of religion. It is an irrelevant intellectual proposition, and should suffer the condemnation, "He that is not with me is against me" (Luke 11:23). If the secularist is more thorough going, he may defend secularism as the necessity for man to make his own decisions in life. His secularism will, in this case, be the result of a misunderstanding of Christianity, which he sees as a non-functional answer to life's problems. Unfortunately the church as a whole is presenting stereotyped, irrelevant answers to man's deepest and most pressing questions, thereby reinforcing the secularist in his misunderstanding of the Christian faith. On the other hand, the Christian will sometimes have to defend religion because he knows that the secularist may well be trying to avoid exactly what he claims to want most, i.e., the freedom to make significant life decisions.

Secondly, if secularism is only a thin veneer for unconscious and unexamined religious assumptions, we are deluding ourselves when we attack secularism as the basic problem of society. We may very well be sweeping the house of the secularist clean only to have him go out and bring in seven other spirits more evil.

Finally, if secularism is a denial of literalized and institutionalized gods which have thus been turned into idols, we do have reason to rejoice in the judgment of secular-

ism upon current Christianity and can accept it as the judgment of God upon us all. To the extent that this is true we can make common cause with secularism. We may have a hard time convincing those who are skeptical about religion that we do not fall into the same category as idolaters and venders of opium to the people, but certainly we can best do so by waging open warfare against perversions of Christianity and eliminating some of the irrelevant religious formulas which currently pass for Christian doctrine.

Christianity has a more important job to do than combat secularism. The eternal enemy of true religion is not the lack of religion but false religion and idolatry. Let professing Christians combat the false religious assumptions of modern society and give up the devil's own formula that any religion is better than no religion at all. In other words, let the Church be the Church. Strangely enough, we may find that the whipping boy, secularism, will be on our side in this battle against false religion. If secularism has any lasting strength, it is in its rejection of the literalized gods of inherited religion and its acute awareness of man's loneliness in the face of life's major decisions.

We have abundant scriptural undergirding for concerning ourselves primarily with the clarification of our own faith over against its perversions. Draw up a list, if you care to, of the times Jesus challenged the religious ideas of the scribes, pharisees, and priests, and put alongside it the times he admonished those who professed no religion at all. The first list will be much the longest. Even in those passages which might be considered as testimony to the power of faith in God, such as the miracles and healings, more often than not the persons who had such faith were non-believers or those who had little, if any, religious status in the Jewish community; Samaritans, lepers, publicans, and sinners. In other words, they were the secularists and not the professing religionists of Jesus' day.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE PROTESTANT ERA. By Paul Tillich. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1948. 323 pp. \$4.00.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the centrality and indeed the majesty of the issue with which Tillich wrestles in these pages. It is no less than the form of the Christian religion in the coming age, on whose threshold we stand. In a sense the book looks back. It considers Protestantism to be the typical and preeminent Christian expression in the period now coming to an end ("the Protestant era"). As such it was not only an alternative to Catholicism, but also its successor, the bearer of religious progress. But the age with which Protestantism appeared, whose religious expression Protestantism is (insofar as that age has a religious expression) and upon which Protestantism is peculiarly dependent, is now ending. The question arises, can Protestantism survive the disappearance of the age with which it was so closely connected? Or, in terms of the coming age of history, will Protestantism be its religious interpretation, or will Protestantism be as little able to live in a new time as Catholicism has been able to live in "modern times"? The book might therefore be entitled, "The Protestant Era and After."

Naturally, the book is at great pains to isolate and define the precise character of Protestantism as a form of Christian belief and life. The special Protestant datum is the prophetic "protest," the refusal to repose the heart's trust in any visible form, secular or religious, the pressing to the "boundary situation," where man faces "the unconditioned" and faces it without any standing. Left in such a situation Protestantism becomes a self-engulfing negativity. Protestantism must repose on something, on the basis of which it criticises. At this point many would answer that it presupposes Catholicism, which is therefore the substance of Christianity and upon which Protestantism rests like a lean-to. But

Tillich gives a double denial of this and in so doing he makes a contribution which is unique. On the one hand a religious principle (Protestantism) in which protest is structural cannot be connected, in a relation of dependence, with a religious principle in which criticism is utterly denied (Catholicism). On the other hand, Protestantism is itself a formative principle.

In his idea that Protestantism is a formative principle Tillich is a trail-breaker. We had all hoped so and supposed so, but Tillich shows the fact. To be sure Protestantism is primarily protest, "the denial of every human possibility." This "no" is followed by a divine "yes," whose reason is solely in God himself. This total situation is justification by grace and "faith alone" (*sola fides*). But such a faith as here represented is not a human capacity, it is a "creation of grace." As such it is an "embodiment of grace." The positive reality by which Protestantism lives and which is manifested through it is called the "New Being" by Tillich. The New Being is the Biblical portrait of Jesus as the Christ, denying himself in the Cross, raised from the dead by God. Insofar as Protestantism believes, preaches, acts, it is positive, formative, embodied, real. Insofar as it preaches "justification by faith alone" it preaches against every reality, including its own life. This combination of positive and negative elements, both rooted in the New Being is Protestantism ("the unity of protest and form in a Gestalt of grace"—p. 210).

Protestantism as a creator of form expresses itself in four principles. First, it is always "related to and questioned by" a secular element. Protestantism does not acknowledge a sacred ecclesiastical and sacramental realm beside the secular. Rather the secular is always related to the unconditioned, but in an indirect, unspoken way. In the church the relation which obtains between the unconditioned and the secular order is understood and spoken. This vocation to understand and express the rela-

tion between unconditioned and the secular order ("Light of the world," I like to call it) is the continuing warrant for the existence of the "church" in the "world." The secular order, on its part, is a continuing judgment on the faithfulness and adequacy of the church, and particularly on its perennial pretensions to a sacredness above and apart from the world.

The second principle is that in Protestantism the "eternal element must be expressed in relation to a 'present situation'." Though there is an unchanging "human situation," this expresses itself in changing forms, and therefore the "human situation" can only be touched through the changing forms. The claim that the secular order is taken seriously is tested by the fact that a secular order (secula, age) by its very nature is transitory. Third, the Protestant principle requires daring, risk. If the age is genuinely encountered in all its newness and reality, no one knows how the venture will come out. Protestantism does not have a knowledge-relation to timeless realities but a vital-relation to changing events. Finally, this relation with reality must be 'belief-ful.' Belief has for its 'object' not some reality beside the real, but rather the deepest level of reality, where the quality of the whole becomes apparent. Meanwhile it is belief (itself an "act") which reaches reality and not the cynicism which despairs or the preoccupation with the visible which tends to illusion.

Two further notes may be in place. Emphasis on the New Being, access to which constitutes the positive basis of Protestantism, leads naturally to a "high" sacramental doctrine. On the one hand, bread, wine, water, and all realities have a natural power to point to their depth. This is the "realistic" view of the sacraments and such a realistic view is presupposed by Christian, or any other, sacramentalism. On the other hand, the Christian understanding of the depth of life denies the ability of anything to embody the unconditioned directly. Thus there is something 'broken' and discontinuous about the Christian sacraments.

Like everything else in Christianity, they "groan" (Rom. 8:23). Failure to take account of this is the great error of the Catholic sacramental form of Christianity.

Tillich raises the question about the form of the Protestant church in the period ahead. He distinguishes three possibilities. First, Protestantism could retreat behind fortress walls. This is what Rome has done during the present age. It is a way to preserve institutional life but it results in irrelevance. Second, it may transform itself in the sense of re-introducing certain Catholic elements, as is done frequently today. This trend suffers from a double defect. On the one hand these innovations are not rooted in the traditional ethos of Protestantism and are superficially based. On the other hand, Rome exploits these elements with greater skill and conviction. Third, the development of a group, drawn from all churches and from beyond the churches, which will live by the Protestant principle. This suggestion is perhaps the most striking and important thing in the book and the most Protestant teaching, belief-ful, daring, venturous.

What are the assets and dangers of Protestantism in the present situation of "disintegrated masses," the deepening crisis initiated by the World War? On the one hand the decision and responsibility required by Protestantism seems to demand more of men than they are willing or able to expend. Further, the crisis requires greater transformations both of thought and action than present leaders of Protestantism suspect. On the other hand, Protestantism has a number of prime assets. While the burden of autonomy makes many people overly willing to break and run, the better spirits will welcome a better alternative to autonomy than the heteronomy of Rome, communism, or fascism. Second, Protestantism has a deep sympathy with the boundary situation of meaninglessness to which autonomy has brought modern man. Third Protestantism, in the prophetic protest, has the one clear, unambiguous answer to the enslaving pretensions of modern totalitarianism. Finally,

Protestantism alone can face the age in its dynamic uniqueness and let it be itself. It has no golden thirteenth century from whose norm it criticizes or attempts to force the present. Protestantism is willing to learn; it is as dependent on the new day as the new day upon it.

Dr. James Luther Adams deserves a great deal of thanks for assembling and, in many cases, translating the essays of which this book is composed. While I have not compared his translation with the German, I have been in the company of Dr. Tillich. On the basis of three unforgettable years with him, I say "they sound like Tillich."

CLIFFORD L. STANLEY

CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL. By *Arnold J. Toynbee*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1948. 263 pp. \$3.50.

History, as we know, is both the record of events and the events themselves. Rare is the historian who is willing to content himself entirely with the record and not take a hand in trying to shape what his successors will have to record. Professor Toynbee reveals himself in this book as considerably more of a progressive than Oswald Spengler, his immediate master in the new style of omni-history. These gentle, suggestive essays are altogether more prepossessing than the bitter, archstoical little pamphlets that followed closely on *Die Untergang Des Abendlandes* and confirmed once again an old suspicion that the genius of historiography and the genius of political analysis are not always blood relations.

Nevertheless, it would probably be unwise to claim Toynbee as a fighting ally in the ranks of socialist Christianity. He seems to be moving into a position, vis-à-vis our current problems of political means and ends, not unlike old-fashioned Lutheran antinomianism. Following his emancipation from the cyclical view, Toynbee seems to have adopted a somewhat archaic and inflexible view of history as wholly *Heilsgeschichte*, in the Augustinian and Lutheran senses. Progress is an "increase in the means of grace." Toynbee usually

takes the speculative-Aristotelian rather than the prophetic stance in proximate questions of justice. He understands that the important issues of the day are political rather than solely economic. He knows on the most general grounds how to tick off the classical Marxists. But "politics" seems to involve mainly the secondary problem of world unification, which he favors.

Toynbee's talent is clearly not for close, in-field analysis of the sort in which, for example, R. H. Crossman of the British Labor Party excels. He has at least one foot back in a mellower, less embattled generation. (Many of his amusing dramatic devices are adapted from writers like Chesterton, Shaw, and Wells, of the Great Age of Paradox.) His quarrels seem to lie not so much with Lenin and Trotsky (whom he brackets, rather too comfortably, with such erstwhile fellow revolutionaries as St. John Chrysostom and Theodore of Studium) as with Frazer and Gibbon in their capacities as prophets of Antichrist.

Toynbee himself confronts us with a prime paradox of our intellectual life. On the one hand he is certainly a great *animating* historian. He has set historiography free once more from the twin, self-renewing demons of group complacency and chauvinism. That oppressive modern Western consciousness of "making history" is wonderfully eased in the long perspectives he opens and fills with significant action. East and West, in Toynbee's scheme of things, Byzantium, Rome, Islam, and the Orient react on one another in an endless exchange of spiritual gifts. Except in the Passion of Christ, no ultimate struggles are won, although many are decisively lost.

On the other hand, the vitality of his thought tends to dwindle as it reaches its human and temporal center in the historian himself. We can make our ungracious complaint about this, I believe, on the grounds that something more general than Professor Toynbee's own appealingly great personal modesty is in question. The difficulty, if not fundamentally theological, can at least be put in theological terms. It arises from, or results in, an effort to make

the best of two worlds, the liberal-romantic and the neo-orthodox (or call it what you will). I hope I am fair in choosing the following formulae from one of his essays as the best illustration of my point: "The doctrine of the Trinity is the theological way of expressing the revelation that God is spirit; the doctrine of the redemption is the theological way of expressing the revelation that God is love."

ROBERT W. FLINT

REFLECTIONS OF THE SPIRIT. *By Winnifred Wygal.* The Woman's Press. 1948. \$2.00.

For some time students have remarked at the lack of profound worship materials for individuals and groups; most current writings have either drawn heavily upon non-Christian and sub-Christian materials, or labored some issues to the extent of sacrificing beauty and sensitivity. It remained for Winnifred Wygal, long-time stalwart in the Fellowship, to edit a devotional manual which combines in the most satisfying fashion appropriate use of the Bible, of Christian treasures from Kierkegaard to C. S. Lewis, without destroying the "lift" which is of the essence in such matters. Your reviewer takes personal pleasure in recommending *Reflections of the Spirit* without reservation.

One of the most useful aspects of the book, whose make-up and type are themselves things of beauty, is the space provided for writing in personal meditations or further findings on the same topic. Sections are organized around a striking theme, with Bible texts, prayers, poetry and hymn suggestions; and then pages are left for writings between units. Dorothy Day of *The Catholic Worker* remarked in one of her books that meaningful prayer had often come to her through the discipline of writing, of putting pen to paper in thought toward God. Winnifred Wygal has thoughtfully provided for those of us whose personal devotions often take the direction of such an act of catharsis.

We should not imply, however, that the

book is primarily for personal use—although remarkably adequate for that. The selection of material is throughout governed by a genuine Christian faith, by a sensitive appreciation of the central reference of Christ and His Church, by the willingness to listen to the testimony of other generations in the communion of saints. No individual reader will be tripped up rather than lifted, and no group leader will need to excerpt or apologize in using this book.

FRANKLIN H. LITTELL

CHRISTIANS AND THE WORLD OF NATIONS. *By Vernon H. Holloway.* Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1948. 96 pp. \$.60.

A current church school guide for adults contains these words: Jesus "assumed that man . . . responds to love and the appeal to brotherhood and the common good—even at the sacrifice of his own individual or class interest." Those who have charge of discussion groups for older young people and adults will find Professor Holloway's booklet a valuable corrective to such superficiality, unfortunately still pervading much of our church school literature. *Christians and the World of Nations* is a reading and study guide in the group-graded Pilgrim Series, written "with the hope that it may serve in the discussion and clarification of Christian responsibility for international relations" and from out of the general theological convictions of our Fellowship.

Recognizing that we can never escape self-interest and the presence of power in international affairs, Holloway addresses himself at the outset to the problem of atomic energy and points to the necessity of an international organization in which "the mutual security of the society of nations may be served." He contends that our responsibility is not "to condemn the United Nations, but to understand the forces which hinder its work, and to improve the conduct of our own nation" as a member. World government now is ruled out on the basis of the present unequal distribution of power and the lack of community on a

world scale. Like the pacifists (whose fatal dilemma Holloway rightly portrays as trying to be both "right" and "effective") the advocates of world government may simply illustrate how "good" causes can entail evil consequences: we might end up with either the final division of the nations into two worlds or an international government by tyranny and conquest. A more useful way to expend our energies is to concentrate on American-Russian relations, where Holloway advocates a combination of patience, humility, and firmness.

There is a study guide at the end of each chapter and an excellent bibliography. The author is informed and up-to-date with his factual material, presenting, for example, the story of the quest in the U.N. for atomic energy control and a brief review of the principle organs of the U.N. It is refreshing once in a while to see some educational literature that is healthy, precisely through recognizing the constancy of man's spiritual unhealthiness.

A. ROY ECKARDT

THE PENDULUM OF POLITICS. By *Aubrey Jones*. London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1946.

In elaborating a philosophy of conservatism Mr. Jones has revealed the more profound thinking that goes on in British politics than in our own political life, and he has thrown out a distinct challenge to the radical Christian who will recognize many of his own pragmatic political assumptions. The reader may well decide that his differences with Mr. Jones are chiefly ones of degree. One may doubt that some U. S. Senators would comprehend the material in this book, but it nevertheless makes comprehensible some Senatorial voting records. In short, it is a good defense of Tory conservatism.

The author's theme is that history is an eternal conflict between liberty and authority. The motion of history is that of the pendulum, "swinging from authority through liberty, more liberty, excessive liberty, back to authority again." He seems

convinced that permanent betterment in the socialist's terms is out of the question, though it is never made clear why he is more optimistic of achieving his conservative goal of equilibrium between liberty and authority in human society. He is quite right in his conviction that a monolithic society may result from leftist control as quickly as from rightist control. But he is quite wrong in recognizing only Marxists to the left of the so-called progressives. His political spectrum fails to distinguish the pragmatic socialists who are neither doctrinaire Marxists nor merely liberal.

His policy then turns out to be one of retrenchment: the conservative should attempt to preserve the best we now have, even if it isn't very good, in order to avoid change to something worse. It must be admitted in view of recent history that Mr. Jones' fear is partly justified since change has brought many plagues as well as benefits. But he places the blame in the wrong place. For example, he laments the loss of the personal relationship in industry charging Liberalism and Socialism with its destruction, whereas the loss actually resulted from integration and centralization of industrial control by the industrialists themselves.

Included within Mr. Jones' conservative philosophy are: an indictment of collective security, a worthy appeal that power politics be used rather than avoided in quest of peace, a somewhat weak "justification of empire," and a most fascinating chapter "In Defense of Class." All of these are challenging; but all betray the fear that is a major tool of the not-so-scrupulous conservatives, who, unlike Mr. Jones, are concerned less with the welfare of society than with their own well-being.

LYMAN H. LEGTERS, JR.

CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY. By *Alan Paton*. New York: Scribner, 1948. \$3.00.

Thoughtful persons today realize how surely and how swiftly Africa is moving into the center of the world picture and how

pregnant with every problem which has plagued the world is this comparatively unknown giant of the tropics. Just before his recent death Mr. Charles Fahs of the Missionary Research Library and an authority on "new" worlds prophesied with great conviction the emergence of Africa as the next locus of concern in our world.

For centuries European empires have grown fat from the riches in natural resources and cheap labor available for exploitation south of the Sudan. For decades white men from every country including America have worked and grown wealthy there. The sports world has known Africa for its big game hunts; the archaeological and anthropological world, for its revelations of early human life; the Christian world, for its heroic missionaries, of whom the names of Livingstone and Schweitzer stand out for all time. Since the Boer War, since Gandhi's debut as a world figure forty years ago in his struggle on behalf of Indians residing in the Transvaal, since the achievements of Jan Smuts in the League of Nations and later in the United Nations, and since the politically obvious trip of the English Royal family a year and a half ago, it has been increasingly apparent that Africa is coming. When that colossus really stirs into self-consciousness and into the united efforts of a continent, the conflict latent in her will confront the world with one more stage for struggle, one more area prepared by man's misdeeds to thwart God's purposes of order and justice.

The Rosenwald Fund in making its final grants in the early spring of 1948 joined with the Phelps Stokes Fund in a plan for a study and research fellowship for Dr. Liston Pope of the Yale Divinity School. Dr. Pope, a theologian and sociologist, is one of America's coming authorities on the problems of race and of labor as these become the responsibility of Christians, particularly in the South of this country from which he comes. Dr. Pope, who plans to make his next study in South Africa, says that there is no spot in the world today where there is condensed into so small an area so sharp an impingement of race upon

labor and of labor upon race as in Johannesburg and the surrounding counties. There in concentrated form, in a region where there are proportionately to the whites more black people than in any other part of the world, and where labor organization is still in its elementary state, are to be found in raw and obvious forms all of the problems to which racial and workers' minorities anywhere are subject.

The New York *Herald-Tribune* for March 30, 1948, carried an article which said in part that Johannesburg is "a city built on gold. There is gold even in the streets, built as many of them are on waste from nearby mines. Visiting Americans, impressed by the city's sky-scrapers, its modern shops and theaters, its mansions and its smartly dressed Europeans, have called Johannesburg the most Americanized city in Africa. But those who go away without seeing the native townships and squatters' camps on the outskirts of the white metropolis have missed half the picture. There mile upon mile over the veld south of the town sprawl the collection of standardized houses and shacks built . . . for its African community. . . . The real shock comes when you reach the squatters' settlements. . . . Here is the shanty town of all shanty towns, a mass of 70,000 black people existing in patchwork shelters of burlap, tin and rubble."

So we come to Alan Paton, who lives in Johannesburg and has been connected officially with a sort of reformatory for native boys. This reformatory figures in his story, and it is a disquieting though unconfirmed rumor that Mr. Paton's novel may have brought down upon him the wrath of the authorities and resulted in his recent resignation. For Alan Paton is a remarkable young man, if he is to be judged by this first book which he has published.

Cry, the Beloved Country is the story of a native Zulu pastor named Stephen Kumalo, who with his wife presides in a rural village parish a long journey from the great city of Johannesburg. From time to time the native parishioners have slipped away to the alluring city, among them a brother

and a sister of Kumalo, and his son. In trusting naivete, mingled as it so often is with a strange native shrewdness and a remarkable faith in God and prayer, the Reverend Stephen Kumalo walks the weary way from unsuspecting faith in his relatives as he imagines them growing in goodness and knowledge and economic security in the city, to the complete disillusionment of finding them in the underworld of Johannesburg where in sin and poverty they have been made the pawns of those who exploit the natives and have succumbed to the most ugly evils to which flesh may sink. Aided by his remarkable younger pastor friend Msimangu, he finds his sister now a degraded prostitute, his brother a stooge for a political machine, and his son an inmate of the reformatory, later charged with murder and sentenced to death. The victim of the murder is found to be the prominent, deeply Christian young white man, Arthur Jarvis, whose father, a landed gentleman, lives on a big plantation on the edge of Kumalo's village. It is not until the grief stricken father sits in his dead son's study looking at his pictures of Christ on the cross and of Abraham Lincoln, and reading Arthur's journal, that the scales fall from his eyes and he begins to see what his son had been fighting for in that great city and why he was so loved by black and white alike who knew him. Out of his cleared vision the elder Jarvis and Pastor Kumalo, also bowed with grief, come together and become friends.

Great as is Mr. Paton's dealing with the "native problem" and striking as is the poetry of his prose, and vivid as are his descriptions of the strikes in the gold mines and the hard attitude toward those workers by the officials of the Christian church, yet the greatest thing about this novel is its portrayal of what is involved in being a Christian. This book is a great Christian document. It is conceivable that some of

the Negro readers of the story may feel that the author is weak in his grasp of the relation of struggle on the part of oppressed minorities to advance and to the role of the Christian. This would be the question I would put to Mr. Paton could I discuss his philosophy of change. Kumalo and his Christian colleagues will seem to some Americans too forgiving and too docile, and in principle at least this reviewer shares that anxiety. However there is a dimension in Mr. Paton's treatment of this human tragedy, a perspective in the nature of the Christianity involved both in the Jarvises and in the two native pastors which outruns our usual formulas about the relation of justice to love. Mr. Paton has caught some of the quality which we find in the Cross and has so incarnated it in these characters that we transcend the usual human equations and come face to face with what God asks of man, *any man*, who in his extremity is caught in life *as it is*.

Members of the Fellowship would do well to read this novel. Read it for its beauty, for its beauty is that of "a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills." Read it for an understanding of gold mines and an embryonic labor movement. Read it for a picture of how white men and black men feel about each other and how their feelings have scarred the world we must live in. Read it for the story of Sodom and Gomorrah in modern times and remember that South Africa has learned much from the United States! Read it, most of all to learn what is the comfort in desolation of the Christian faith. Alan Paton's sub-title is "A Story of Comfort in Desolation."

Our readers will be interested to know that Dr. Liston Pope and Alan Paton are already in contact by mutual friends and correspondence and that they probably will be working together on some of the problems which Dr. Pope expects to study.

WINNIFRED WYGAL

